

Meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

16 March 2026

Responses to Recommendations / Additional Information Requested

	Recommendations / Information Requested:	Response:	Accepted / Partially Accepted / Not Accepted:
Corporate Performance Quarter 3 2025-26			
Recommendations			
1	<p>The Committee recommended that consideration be given to including more timescales in the narratives in the Performance Dashboards, in particular for the following:</p> <p>a. WBO 1.6.6 <i>Develop the Healthy Living Partnership Strategy</i> – timescale for securing feasibility funding;</p> <p>b. WBO 2.3.1 – timescale/milestones to <i>Approve and implement the new digital strategy</i>; and</p> <p>c. WBO 3.4 – timescale for each of the projects under <i>Modernise School Buildings</i></p>	<p>a. Progressing development of the Healthy Living Partnership Strategy, with feasibility funding secured (May 2026), leisure capital programme tender anticipated (June 2026), draft strategy expected (November 2026), followed by consultation & engagement (November 2026 – January 2027), and final strategy to be brought forward for consideration (March 2027).</p> <p>b. Digital Strategy – the milestones for this are being reviewed to ensure there is a good read across to the Transformation Strategy. The implementation of the Strategy will now be by 31.12.26</p> <p>c. Noted</p>	<p>a. Accepted</p> <p>c. Accepted</p>
2	<p>The Committee recommended that consideration be given to amending the wording of WBO 2.1.4 from <i>'Improve the way we handle and learn from corporate complaints and compliments'</i> to include improving the <u>process</u> relating to complaints.</p>	<p>The Information Team has developed a process to monitor both the effectiveness of the complaints process and how complaints data is being used to improve services and delivery of care. It is proposed that Services then consider any emerging themes and identify any service improvements required as a result of concerns raised. The information identified will then be used to contribute to service development which could include additional training, changes to internal</p>	<p>Accepted</p>

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		<p>procedures, increased monitoring etc. The Complaints Team is currently exploring in conjunction with the Customer Services Team and our external provider Granicus, the possibility of developing a central system for logging and processing complaints. It is recognised that we must build and act on the knowledge gathered within the complaints data and use it as a positive source to promote improvement in relation to any customer contact with the Authority. Going forward, it is anticipated that the new system will provide a more timely and streamlined way to produce data for reports and improve data records within the complaints process.</p>	
3	<p>In relation to homelessness, the Committee discussed that sometimes, although the Council meets its legal duty to people presenting as homeless, e.g. through providing temporary accommodation, their particular housing need is not always met and given the number of new homes being built in the County, the need for a percentage to be appropriate for people's needs. The Committee therefore recommended that consideration be given to reviewing the effectiveness of the Council's interventions in relation to homelessness are measured in a citizen focussed way and how the Council is working with Registered Social Landlords and the private sector to ensure a range of</p>	<p>It is accepted that the offer of temporary accommodation provision does not always meet the persons complete requirements this is down to stock availability and the urgent need for accommodation being seen as the most important factor at the stage of presentation.</p> <p>It is also accepted that the current level and type of available Housing provision across Bridgend requires further work. To ensure this remains at the forefront of the work being undertaken there are ongoing robust development meetings that are led by representatives of BCBC with ALL RSL's being requested to attend monthly.</p> <p>These discussions centre around future housing development which takes into consideration</p>	Accepted

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	<p>suitable accommodation to address homelessness in the short, medium and long term.</p>	<p>Housing need, type of Housing provision required and areas of development.</p> <p>In addition to this, Housing have created a new Housing Development working group which will be focusing on scrutinising RSL grant development proposals to ensure they meet the needs of the BCBC development strategy. This group will consist of a representative from housing, planning, finance and legal (Officer level) for scrutiny and agreement. Once agreed the proposal is referred into the Development infrastructure development Board for approval (or for further clarity). This will also include the future purchases of HMO accommodation.</p> <p>This will ensure that there is consistency across BCBC's wider development approach and the developments meet the current and future housing needs.</p> <p>With consideration to prevention measures- with impending changes within Homelessness legislation and the newly agreed Social Housing Allocation Policy, soon to be project managed for implementation, the KPI's and their criteria will be reviewed in due course.</p> <p>In relation to the prevention of homelessness, the Housing and Homelessness department is currently developing a new structure which</p>	

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		provides more front-line staff who will continue to focus on the prevention of homelessness.	
4	The Committee expressed concern regarding the statement in WBO 4.5.2 that the Service's three-year growth proposal ' <i>is still awaiting feedback from the Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services</i> ' and recommended that the narrative be updated as soon as possible in the Performance Dashboard.	Bridgend Youth Support Service has received additional core allocation for the forthcoming financial year to support school-based interventions surrounding the new Care, Support and Guidance Framework. This will be supported by school-based activity and associated funding to ensure service continuity is maintained.	Accepted
5	The Committee discussed the <i>Sickness Absence by Reason</i> table in the Performance Dashboard and recommended that last year's figures are also included in this table in order to demonstrate whether levels have improved and the overall direction of travel.	These will be included at Q4 and future reports.	Accepted
6	The Committee recommended that consideration be given to including Estyn Inspection Outcomes on the Regulatory Tracker.	<p>Estyn is the independent education and training inspectorate for Wales. It is responsible for inspecting the quality and standards of education and training in schools, further education, and work-based learning.</p> <p>As a non-ministerial government department funded by the Welsh Government, Estyn provides independent accountability.</p> <p>School inspection outcomes are published within six weeks of an inspection and are within the public domain. It is therefore appropriate to include school inspection outcomes within the regulatory</p>	Accepted

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		tracker to support effective oversight and assurance.	
Additional Information Requested			
7	The Committee discussed the measure, ' <i>higher/lower preferred</i> ' and requested a note setting out its use and how it is used when commitments/PIs are on or above target.	<p>The PI preferred outcome indicates what a good outcome or improvement looks like, and whether being above or below our set target will be the better outcome.</p> <p>Higher preferred: This means the higher the result (number or percentage), the better we are doing – e.g Percentage of waste reused, recycled or recycled. We want this result to be high, and to see improvement this will be increasing over time. If the target is set at 70%, we want to achieve 70% or more.</p> <p>Lower preferred: This means the lower the result (number or percentage) the better we are doing – e.g Percentage of Year 11 leavers from schools in the authority identified as not being in education, employment or training (NEET). We want this result to be low, and to see improvement this will be decreasing over time. If the target is set at 2%, we want to achieve 2% or less.</p>	
8	With reference to WBO 3.4.3 and 3.4.4 relating to Ysgol Y Ferch O'r Sger, Afon Y Felin and Corneli Primary School, the Committee requested confirmation that the necessary paperwork for the land swap with Valleys to Coast had been	The necessary paperwork for the land swap agreement for the Bridgend West School Modernisation Scheme has now been signed. Officers will provide further information in respect of the likely timescales regarding the contract shortly.	Accepted

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	signed and the likely timescales for the construction contract to be awarded.		
9	<p>The Committee discussed WBO 3.2 and requested details of the support for schools to address issues relating to behaviour and attendance, to aim to achieve the targets and that further detail is also included in the narrative on the Performance Dashboard.</p>	<p>Support for behaviour and attendance is delivered within the context of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the All-Wales Attendance Framework and the Belonging, Engaging and Participating agenda; • the Bridgend School Attendance Strategy (2023–25) and revised Enforcement and Children Missing Education policies; • the Education, Early Years and Young People Strategic Plan (2023–2026); and • Estyn recommendations arising from inspection activity, including the Enhanced Local Authority Link Inspector Visit (January 2025). <p>Attendance and behaviour are treated as safeguarding, wellbeing and equity issues, rather than compliance alone, ensuring proportionate challenge alongside targeted support.</p> <p>The local authority has strengthened its attendance offer through the expansion of the Education Engagement Team (EET), bringing Education Welfare Officers into a single, consistent model of delivery. This has enabled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • risk-based deployment of EWOs, including peripatetic staffing based on emerging need; 	Accepted

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> termly attendance drives and “late-on-the-gate” initiatives; regular attendance review meetings with schools to monitor trends, challenge practice and agree joint action; and annual attendance audits, supported by an local authority-developed toolkit, with agreed improvement actions. <p>This approach has contributed to measurable improvement. Attendance in Bridgend primary schools increased by 2.2 percentage points between 2021-2022 and 2023-2024, and secondary school attendance increased by 2.4 percentage points, with Bridgend now performing above the all-Wales average, particularly in the secondary sector.</p> <p>Persistent absenteeism and reduced timetables are closely monitored. Schools are challenged to justify the use of Pastoral Support Plans (PSPs) and reduced timetables, with oversight through safeguarding surgeries and attendance audits to ensure decisions remain appropriate, time-limited and safeguarding-led.</p> <p>Behaviour support is provided through a graduated and preventative model designed to reduce exclusion and promote re-engagement. This includes:</p>	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specialist advisory and direct intervention through the Communication and Relationships Team (CART), Educational Psychology Service and Behaviour Support practitioners; • training in de-escalation, Team Teach and trauma-informed practice, with strong evaluation evidence showing improved regulation, reduced incidents and lower exclusion risk; • use of PSPs, managed moves and early intervention panels to prevent escalation; and • strong local authority oversight of exclusion decisions, including challenge at Pupil Discipline Committees and reintegration support. <p>Attendance and behaviour improvement is effective where linked to wider vulnerability support.</p> <p>Care-experienced learners achieved a significant improvement in attendance, with primary attendance rising to 91.3%, supported through PDG-CLA funded wellbeing and relational interventions.</p> <p>Learners eligible for free school meals show a sustained upward trend in attendance, particularly in the primary sector, reflecting effective family</p>	

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		<p>engagement, breakfast provision, mentoring and PDG-funded pastoral support.</p> <p>Young carers demonstrate transformational improvement in attendance, underpinned by identification, emotional support and reduced isolation.</p> <p>Learners educated other than at school, including those at The Bridge Pupil Referral Unit, benefit from strong reintegration pathways and improved attendance compared with their previous mainstream placement.</p> <p>These outcomes reinforce emphasis on addressing underlying barriers including trauma, poverty, additional learning needs and family circumstances rather than focusing solely on sanctions.</p>	
10	The Committee requested that the upcoming briefing referred to by the Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services regarding the school modernisation programme includes detailed updates on each school modernisation and upgrade project.	Noted	Accepted
11	The Committee expressed concern regarding the statement in WBO 4.3 that <i>'more people are being made homeless from hospital requiring specially adapted</i>	In relation to this question, figures around presentations as homelessness from hospital with specific need for adapted accommodation may not always be within Homelessness figures.	Accepted

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	<i>accommodation</i> and requested the number of cases falling into this category and what measures have been considered to address this issue, e.g. possible step-down care or use of existing residential or nursing homes on a temporary basis.	Homelessness figures would provide an overview of those presenting from hospital but not those requiring step down, residential or nursing home care.	
Budget Monitoring 2025-26 – Quarter 3 Revenue Forecast			
Additional Information Requested			
12	The Committee expressed concern regarding the significant projected year end underspend and requested an indication from Cabinet of their strategic priorities for use of any budget surplus after closure of the accounts and that any potential known significant under or overspends are reported to the Scrutiny Budget Working Group to improve transparency and to ensure that it adds further value to the budget setting process.	The priorities for Cabinet when dealing with any underspends at the year end will remain the same as those outlined in the budget setting process for 2026/27. Going forward, any anticipated underspends will be included in the financial information provided to the Budget Working Group	Accepted
13	The Committee expressed concern regarding the underspend in 8 out of 11 Service Areas in Adult Social Care and requested confirmation that the efficiencies are not having an adverse effect on service users.	Adult Social Care received additional £1,388,937 Welsh Government Pathway of Care Delay funding within 2025-26 and recruitment to new posts has been phased through the year. This has resulted in a positive net position this year with grant offsetting existing eligible expenditure. This will not be	Accepted

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		<p>evident in future years as recruitment to new posts has concluded.</p> <p>Adult social care also delivers efficiencies in commissioned care by applying a prudent strength's based and outcome focussed approach. This is monitored and quality assured via weekly outcomes panels. The Senior Management Team also monitor quality assurance , complaints and other feedback from individuals to identify any themes relating to this this approach. Continuing to apply a strength-based practice approach will be vital to maximise independence and exponential demand for social care services in light of demographic pressures.</p>	
Forward Work Programme Update			
14	The Committee discussed the list of Reports to be scheduled and requested that these be scheduled as soon as possible.	To be actioned by Scrutiny and Chair of Committee in Work Planning Meetings	Accepted